



Meramec Tops Flo Valley 73-62, Wins Conference Crown

The STLCC-Meramec men's basketball team defeated host Florissant Valley Tuesday night 73-62 for its first conference (MCCAC) championship since 1990. The Magic, now 23-6, won seven conference games in a row after dropping its first two on the road to finish with a 7-2 mark.

"It's really rewarding because it's a difficult task to do," said head coach **Randy Albrecht**. "Three Rivers was second in the nation last year, Mineral Area is Division I, Lewis and Clark went Division I this year. It's a tough thing to win when there's Division I schools in there with full scholarships and a lot of good players."

In the clincher against Florissant Valley, Meramec would open up a 39-32 halftime lead but the Fury was determined to battle back. The game stayed close throughout the second half until the Magic pulled away in the final two minutes.

"We got good play again off our bench," said Albrecht. "We really had trouble finishing around the basket. But, I thought our defense has been pretty decent all year. We got some tough rebounding out of **Ryun Davis** (McCluer North) and **Jermaine Jones** (Park Hills, MO) - these kids have really battled hard on the boards for us."

Leading the scoring for Meramec was freshman **Torraino Hellems** (Oakville) with 16 points, followed by three players with 11 points each: forward Jermaine Jones, and **Alen Hadzimahovic** (Fox). Davis was also in double figures with 10 points.

Meramec finishes the regular season with Lindenwood-Belleville on Wednesday, Feb. 23 before the Region XVI Tournament Mar. 4-5 at North Central College in Trenton, MO. The Magic are the number one seed in the tourney.

"When you keep winning, a lot of doors open up," said Albrecht. "It's real satisfying to go on the road and win this."